

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SAN SA 02082 051721Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----051723Z 019855 /53
O 051705Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4215

S E C R E T SAN SALVADOR 2082

EXDIS

FROM HICKS TO TODMAN AND MATHEWS

E.O. 16): GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ES
SUBJECT: RICHARDSON CASE

REF: (A) SAN SALVADOR 2056, (B) TODMAN/HICKS TELCON OF MAY 4

1. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING, BASED UPON DEPARTMENT CONVERSATIONS PRIOR TO MY FIELD TRIP AND UPON REF B, THAT THE USG DOES NOT INTEND TO RELENT IN PRESSING THE GOES FOR A MEANINGFUL RESPONSE CONCERNING RICHARDSON. SPECIFICALLY NEEDED AT THIS JUNCTURE IS A DIRECT, EMPHATIC USG MESSAGE FROM WASHINGTON TO PRESIDENT MOLINA. SUCH A MESSAGE CAN ONLY HAVE THE DESIRED IMPACT IF SENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE OR PRESIDENT CARTER TO THE SALVADORAN CHIEF OF STATE. THE EMBASSY JUDGES, AND I AGREE AFTER A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT THE SITUATION HERE, THAT ANYTHING SHORT OF A VANCE, OR PREFEREABLY CARTER, COMMUNICATION WILL ONLY EVOKE A REPLAY OF GOES' EVASIVE, DILATORY AND UNRESPONSIVE EXPLANATIONS.

2. THE GOES HAS USED POSITIVE HIGH-LEVEL USG COMMUNICATIONS (E.G., CARTER THANK-YOU TO MOLINA AND VANCE EXPRESSION OF CONCERN OVER THE BORGONOVO KIDNAPPING) TO SUPPORT IVAS CLAIM THAT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE NORMAL, UNAFFECTED BY THE RICHARDSON MATTER. WE CAN DO NO LESS THAN EXPRESS OUR CONCERN

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OVER THE UNRESOLVED MATTER OF AN AMERICAN'S MURDER WITH EQUAL EMPHASIS, AT AN EQUALLY HIGH LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION. THEN, TOO, IN ACKNOWLEDGING PUBLICLY THE DISPATCH AND ESSENTIALS OF A VANCE/MOLINA OR CARTER/MOLINA LETTER, WE SHALL FINALLY CORRECT THE INCONGRUOUS DISPARITY THAT EXISTS BETWEEN REPEATED AND STRONG EMBASSY STATEMENTS RE RICHARDSON CASE AND THE RETICENCE THE DEPARTMENT HAS SHOWN IN NOT ITSELF

RAISING THE TOPIC PUBLICLY (AS DISTINCT FROM REACTING TO A PRESS OR OTHER QUERY--WHICH HAS YET TO BE POSED AT ANY RATE).

3. IN BRIEF, WE NEED:

--TO SEND HIGHEST USG EXPRESSION OF GRAVITY OVER RICHARDSON CASE TO THE GOES;
--TO END THE DEPARTMENT'S PUBLIC RETICENCE ON THIS SUBJECT;
--TO GIVE THE GOES A CLEAR FORMAL DEPICTION OF CONCRETE MEASURES TO ENSUE IN THE FACE OF CONTINUED UNRESPONSIVENESS;
--TO EMPHASIZE PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY IN A CASE INVOLVING THE MURDER OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN BY ANOTHER GOVERNMENT'S OFFICIALS (AN INSTANCE OF AN ULTIMATE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION: SUMMARY DAARIVATION OF LIFE);
--TO SET A STRONG PRECEDENT RE USG REACTION IN THIS CASE, WITH AN EYE ON FUTURE TREATMENT OF OTHER AMERICANS BY SALVADORAN AUTHORITIES.

4. ACCORDING TO REF B, THE ABOVE-MENTIONED CONCRETE MEASURES WOULD BE THOSE CITED IN MY DRAFT LETTER. ADDITIONALLY, THE QUESTION OF US SUPPOGS OR RATHER LACK THEREOF FOR SALVADORAN PROJECTS WITH INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE INCLUDED AS A POSSIBLE REPERCUSSION FROM THE GOES STANCE ON RICHARDSON.

5. IN ADDITION TO SUCH A MESSAGE, THE PERSONAL VISIT OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OR HIGHER OFFICIAL WOULD SEND THE RIGHT SIGNAL OF GRAVITY TO THE GOES. FOR THAT REASON, AS SUGGESTED IN REF A, IF ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN WOULD ADD A STOP IN EL SALVADOR AT THE END OF HIS LATIN AMERICAN TRIP NEXT WEEK, FOR
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THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF DELIVERING A MESSAGE FROM WASHINGTON TO THE GOES ON THE RICHARDSON CASE, THE GOES COULD NOT CONTINUE ITS PUBLIC ITLAIM THAT THE RICHARDSON CASE IS PRIMARILY A PREOCCUPATION OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY RATHER THAN THE USG.

6. I WOULD APPRECIATE ASAP THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO THIS MESSAGE, INCLUDING CONFIRMATION THAT THE LETTER WILL RETAIN THE SUBSTANCE AND TENOR OF THE PRESENT DRAFT.
LOZANO

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Sent Date: 05-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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